



SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH

SOUTHAMPTON BRANCH NEWSLETTER FALL 2008

SEW IN LOVE

I recently saw note paper that had a little girl sewing a heart on a small boy's pants. It had the heading "Sew in Love." My attention was drawn to the parallel between that adorable note card and our branch of NGA. So many people in our group (men, women, and kids) sew and knit in love, sticker and sort or bargain buy in love, and donate time and money in love. (We have received many gifts in loving memory of special friends and family members, too.) It's a great feeling to be part of a group that cares about others and does something about it through their love. Hats off to all our loving volunteers.

HAVE YOU SEEN CLARENCE?

It's not Waldo, but Clarence, we're looking for. This past spring we invited anyone interested to become part of our branch purchase committee. We now have 10 – 12 super shoppers who check out "Clarence" (oh, that's really clearance corners and racks) and sales wherever they go. Here are some of their finds: Joe Boxer undies at \$.28 each, polar fleece NFL blankets for \$3 from our friendly BJ Burnley, printed t shirts for \$.50 through a relative who silk screens, adorable infant outfits for \$2 - \$4 from a flea market vendor who was told our story, jeans for \$.98 and \$1.98, wash cloths for \$.04 to \$.20 each, 2 tubes of tooth paste for \$1. The great buys go on and on. Because of the diligence and dedication of these folks, our purchase power is greatly increased. This allows us to help more people thorough our gifts. If you happen to see big "Clarence" or read of a super sale and you can't shop for NGA yourself, please call 215-357-0121 or 215-357-4600 to share the opportunity.

Clara Dungan has been involved in NGA for over 85 years. She has been knitting for NGA since she was 4 years old.



THANKS TO THE 70TH BIRTHDAY COMMITTEE

About 100 NGA friends gathered for an evening of good food, creative entertainment, an auction, and fun for all as we celebrated and learned about our 70 years of action and looked toward our future.

Special thanks to the 70th Birthday Committee and those who volunteered in preparation for this evening, those who participated in night's activities, and to the North and Southampton Reformed Church who generously provided space for our celebration.

We learned that Clara had been involved in NGA the longest of any of our current contributors.

HOW OUR BRANCH WORKS

Let's follow our NGA branch mission ... providing gifts of new clothes, linens, and toiletries ... from conception until delivery to people in special need. Our branch is really a conduit that helps get these gifts to those who can not provide for their own basic needs. We are a conduit, but all who are part of the process are part of our winning team.

1. DIRECTORS/LEADERS

These branch leaders affirm the mission of our group; organize activities and distributions – give-a-ways, special events like our 70th birthday picnic.

They direct communications – intra-NGA (branches, branch leadership, and national organization) donors, potential donors, partner agencies, and the branch newsletter.

They review and determine our agency partners through visitations, communications, and study of statistics, and assure accountability.

2. CONTRIBUTORS/PARTNERS/AUCTION

This group represents everyone or group who donates things, time, special skills and talents, and/or money.

Donations of things include NGA gifts (new clothes, linens, and toiletries), auction items, space, boxes, refreshments, etc. Time might mean being on the purchase committee; volunteering for whatever needs to be done at working session, at the auction, at special events (making nametags, collecting favors, taking reservations, cooking your supper, etc.) and/or distributions; sewing, knitting or crocheting, or doing paper work at home; being a creative construction expert; doing computer projects; being willing to fetch and carry when opportunity knocks or someone asks. Financial contributors are those who give money or coupons worth money (gifts of all

sizes - \$1 to thousands). They are individuals, families, clubs, schools, scouts, churches, corporations, merchants – caring people including you and me.

3. RECORD KEEPERS

We all keep records. The branch keeps records of all donations. As donors, we should keep our own records and receipts of things bought and donated and use checks. We should also get an acknowledgement of financial gifts from our branch contact.

We also keep records of participants – contributors, volunteers, those getting rebates, those coming to picnics, attending auctions, and so on.

We keep complete records of what is purchased - by whom and what and how many things are given through which partner agencies.

Our records, as provided by our partner agencies, are used for fair allocation of our gifts. This allocation is computerized and based on a formula of percentages of those served, items needed, and items available. Records are a very important part of our credibility.

4. DISTRIBUTING PARTNERS

Partner distributing agencies that the branch leadership has decided to work through must be registered annually with the national NGA organization, agree to give NGA gifts only to their clients who are needy (under the federal laws). They provide information to the branch – the number of “needy” people in our care, their genders, ages, and their specific needs (like...jeans, undies, socks, hoodies, etc.).

They agree to come and pick up the branch gifts designated for distribution to their needy clients.

Partner agencies are also an important part of the network, the system, the conduit that gets our special NGA gifts to those in great need.

FROM A NEWBIE

“I’ve had the opportunity to participate in NGA activities for the past few months and have been struck by the dedication of NGA participants and the fun and fellowship everyone shares. At monthly working sessions, everyone chats and laughs as they make their way through mounds of new clothing, linens, and personal items. Everything is sorted, labeled, counted, reported, and bagged for pick up by a variety of agencies. Towards the end of the session, representatives from the agencies arrive to pick up all these wonderful goods.

Preparing for an NGA auction involves even more volunteers filling a wide variety of functions, from those who receive and prepare donated items to be auctioned, to those who make the auction itself flow smoothly, those who keep attendees and volunteers fed, and those who clean it all up afterwards. The proceeds of the auction go towards more of those wonderful new items NGA distributes.

Behind the scenes, of course, are meetings and planning and lots of record keeping and reporting. At the base of all this activity is the unique opportunity to provide directly for the needs of those in the broader community who are in difficult times, and often desperate circumstances. Giving just doesn’t get any better than this.” Ruth Mendoza

Ruthie has agreed to be our records secretary. We are delighted to have her as part of our team.



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Staff of the Bethesda Project pack their car to take our gifts to their clients and residents. Can you imagine how many tubes of toothpaste it takes a year to help 1,800 homeless men?

A COUPLE NOTES TO AGENCIES

* Our branch, a volunteer, non-sectarian group, is very fortunate to have the support of the North and Southampton Reformed Church and the use of their building on a scheduled use basis. Please help us by making your pickups in a timely manner. If you are early, please do not bother the church staff. An NGA representative will be available at the scheduled time. Thanks!

* Our distribution of gifts is determined through the use of the numbers of and kinds of clients who are in special need that you serve and report to us. In the last three years, we have noticed a vast deviation in the numbers of clients who need NGA help and the ages of those clients in many agencies. We would hope that the person who picks up our Ingathering gifts on Thursday, October 30 between 9:30 and 11 am will be able to clarify some of these discrepancies. We look forward to seeing you then.

AGENCIES, PLEASE CHECK TO SEE THAT OUR INGATHERING PICK-UP IS ON YOUR CALENDAR. Thanks!

NGA MARCH AUCTION SURVIVED THE RAIN

You've heard the old saying "God willing and the creek don't rise." Well, the creek and "Bristol Road River and Pond" rose, but God was willing and the Southampton Branch NGA auction went on through the wind and heavy rain on March 8. Because of the use of the auditorium, the support of many who donated "treasures," over 65 willing volunteers, and customers brave enough to face the elements, our branch raised over \$3,600 to help clothe those in need. Thanks to all for a successful event!



It's amazing that organization and neat displays can be the result of moving items from place to place...and then by moving them again from place to place. It takes lots of patience and help to prepare for the big events.

**NEXT AUCTION: November 8,
2008 - Doors open at 8:30 am**

**Items for this auction accepted on
Sunday, November 2 from 1 to
2:30 ONLY! Receipts will be
available at that time.**

Note: To date our auctions have generated \$197,500. About \$93,700 in the last 10 years.

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You never know what you might find at our auctions. How about an Oscar Mayer, sterling silver, brass, or Bobbie whistle? Could be...

We are very fortunate to have a great team of volunteers from 4 years to 90 years old, including Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts, high school students working service hours, circle members, family members, and dedicated NGA regulars.



Hats anyone? High bidder gets choice; take one or all. No, the models are not included.

Help spread the word about our auctions. There are plenty of bargains for all.

Learn more about us at Laura Castle's websites at www.lauracastle.com or www.ngasouthamptonbranch.org.

FROM OUR PARTNER AGENCIES

Our Brothers' Place is part of **Bethesda Project, Inc.** and serves over 1,800 homeless men a year. They offer mental health, medical, vocational and recovery services to all their guests. At the shelter, they offer meals, showers, and a change of clothes until people can access their support services. Their staff is very impressed that people who are not from the city take such an interest in their homeless poor.

The Philadelphia Center for Human Development reports that their clients are extremely needy and our donations provide immediate relief for many of their people. They have just started working with the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation and our gifts of new clothes enable their clients to have appropriate clothing for job interviews and placement.

The Bucks County Children and Youth Social Services Agency relays that our gifts provide necessary clothing and better hygiene for their clients who can not afford them due to homelessness, and unemployment.

Bucks County Head Start, Inc., a pre-school program for low income families, is pleased that our gifts are available to enhance self-esteem, provide basic necessities to families, bring smiles to children's and parents' faces, and give warmth from blankets, jackets, clothing and socks to their families.

Cedar Avenue House (men) and **Elizabeth House** (women) are supportive environments for adults coming directly from rehabs that deal with alcohol and drug-related problems. They provide a home for people in order to gain strength, some measure of personal security, and a chance to begin a "new life" by breaking destructive patterns of behavior. Our NGA gifts provide the basics and often allow for proper dress for employment which is an expectation of all residents.

The College Settlement of Philadelphia has had a long standing relationship with our organization. Many needy children eligible for their summer camp do not have clothes for their two-week overnight encampment. NGA has come to the rescue and children go home with several outfits to wear. We also provide sleeping bags for those who do not have bedding.

Impact Services Corp. stated that our NGA gifts help their low income families provide other items that are basic necessities such as food, housing, travel, and heat. Our gifts of blankets and diapers are much appreciated as are all of our gifts.

Indian Valley Opportunity Center helps many immigrated families with very few resources. Our gifts ease their adjustment to life in the US.

The **Lenape Valley Foundation**, provider of activities to good mental health, reflects that our donations allow their needy clients to allocate more of their limited resources toward health promoting activities and better nutrition.

Libertae, Inc., a residential program for women and women with young children needing treatment for chemical dependency, reports that having our gifts to offer new residents with limited resources helps them begin a relationship and feel more certain about being in treatment.

No Longer Bound Prevention and Training Center services five low income communities. NGA donations have quite an impact on their clientele. In the spring and summer, our gifts provide cool, fashionable clothing that the youth and adults are extremely proud of. In the fall and winter, coats, sweaters, sweats, socks and underwear are available for the back to school wardrobe. Everyone is very appreciative and looks forward to the blessings that come through NGA.

Children from 0 – 18 years are able to receive new clothes when they arrive at the office of the **Philadelphia Department of Human Services, Children and Youth Division** with very little, inappropriate, or very dirty clothing. Our gifts help the staff feel better because they can assist their young clients in need and help the children look and feel better, too.

Today, Inc. is pleased that our NGA gifts boost client self-esteem, help them connect with a larger caring community, and prepare them for the work world. They told of one resident who was able to go to several job interviews and land a job because he had created the right impression and was more confident in himself in our clothing.

Seeds of Love helps kids in North Philadelphia participate in positive activities. Our gifts help their clients go to school and church looking and feeling like they fit in. They are more comfortable and present themselves more positively because of the toiletries available to them.



MEET THE SCHUCKS

The Schuck family has a Christmas NGA tradition. On Christmas afternoon the “girls” visit and knit and crochet hats and scarves for NGA. Carol (left) and Sue are shown here; Lisa was not available for the picture.

Joe pitches in at Working Session, with computer projects and electronics at the auction, and wherever needed. Carol is a super shopper and Sue delivers donations from Rite Aid Corporation and friends. NGA is a family affair with the Schucks.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP OUR BRANCH

1. Be informed.
2. Give new items or supplies, financial support (make checks payable to *Southampton Branch of NGA*), time, items for or help at the auctions, computer aid, help at special events, write for our newsletter.
3. Designate the Southampton Branch of NGA (our vendor #024360) as your Donor Choice (option) with United Way.
4. Get others involved; tell our story! Anyone, any age, any group, any church, corporation and retailer is welcome to join our efforts.

AS REPORTED AND EXPERIENCED AT OUR 70TH BIRTHDAY PARTY

Our branch is a group of people of all ages, who make, collect, buy and give new clothes, linens and toiletries, or donate monies for the same because we care. Uniting together we can help many.

The Southampton Branch of NGA is proud to report giving 33,682 items to people through 15 local school districts, training and prevention centers, rehab facilities, shelters, children and youth departments, and mental health programs in 2007. Through June this year, we have distributed 11,542 gifts of new items – jeans, jackets, t’s, undies, towels, wash cloths, hats, sleepers, hoodies, sweats, toothpaste, soap and deodorant, blankets, and sleeping bags, among other things - during our Working Sessions. During the last 70 years, the Southampton Branch of NGA has provided people suffering hard times (“needy” under the IRS laws) with over 789,430 items of new clothes, linens, and in most recent year’s toiletries to give them a better chance in life. That’s over ¾ of a million and the last 20 years have generated 552,080 of them. That’s something to celebrate!

What a difference a dedicated group of caring people can make in a community and with the people living there. NGA gifts bring warmth, comfort, dignity and hope to the recipients. Our gifts, toiletries, linens and new clothes, share a lot of TLC – caring and love. We change lives and save lives. What a gift!



Some of our chefs smile for the camera in front of the display board before heating up the grill. They were dressed for the occasion and were happy with the look and the job. (Below) NGA presents were collected at the party. Virginia Boyer knit 70 hats to honor our milestone.



(Right) The servers for the evening got to choose their attire. They felt special because they decided what to wear. All agreed that having no choice in what you wear would not feel very good.



Our own branch band led us in the “NGA SONG.” (Below) The show “Snow White” was popular in 1938, the year we were founded. We had a special production of that story as part of our entertainment. Neat dwarfs!



Seventy years of helping others is something to celebrate and about 100 people joined the party.



Fall 2008 Newsletter
C/o M. Trembath, President
7 Kay Drive
Churchville, PA 18966

IMPORTANT DATES AT A GLANCE

Sunday, November 2 - Auction Set Up
**Saturday, November 8 - Fall Auction -
Doors Open 8:30 am**

Monday, November 10 – Directors’/Leaders’
Meeting - 6:15 pm All Purpose Room, NSRC

**Monday – Thursday, October 27 – 30
Ingathering**

**Monday – (10/27) 4-5 or 7-7:30 pm items
due**

**Thursday morning, October 30 –
9:30 – 11 am Agency Pickup of Gifts**

Sunday, November 2 - Auction Set Up
**Saturday, November 8 - Fall Auction
March 7, 2009 Spring Auction**

NGA is registered as required. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

UNITED WAY OF SEPA AND NGA

Consider making the Southampton Branch of NGA your United Way of Southeastern PA Donor Choice. Our vendor number is 024360. This information used by United Way contributors designating us for their donations can direct funds to the Southampton Branch in other locations. We have gotten gifts from folks in Harrisburg and New Jersey. Thanks for considering our Branch for your United Way donation.

FROM A FORTUNE COOKIE

“Good clothes open many doors.” We in NGA open many doors for those who otherwise might not get the chance to go through them.